

**Frank Blethen
Publisher
The Seattle Times**

Dear Frank,

We write to express our frustration that The Seattle Times Co. is publishing advertisements endorsing one of the state's two candidates for governor, as well as a statewide referendum campaign.

We reporters, photographers, editors, columnists, producers and artists work every day to carry out this newspaper's mission to communicate the news to the Northwest in as fair and objective a manner as possible. We are proud of our stewardship role and your continuous support over the years, despite significant financial burdens.

That is why the decision to publish these ads is so disappointing. It threatens the two things we value the most, the traits that make The Seattle Times a strong brand: Our independence and credibility.

We know you value those things, too. The Seattle Times Company has done an exemplary job providing value to advertisers while also practicing independent journalism.

The company has explained this decision as a creative attempt to grow revenue during the political ad season. In this economic environment initiatives for more revenue are welcomed.

But consider its possible effect on The Seattle Times' core mission, journalism.

We strive to remain independent from the institutions we cover. We shine a light on the process from the outside. We are not part of the process.

This ad campaign threatens to compromise that integrity. By sponsoring an ad for one gubernatorial candidate, The Seattle Times – the entire company – has become one of the top contributors in support of that candidate's campaign. We are now part of a campaign's machinery, creating a perception that we are not an independent watchdog.

The publication of the first ad came one day after The Seattle Times showed its commitment to old-fashioned independent journalism by sponsoring a debate between the two candidates, moderated by one of our political reporters. During that debate, both candidates pointed to stories or editorials written by our staff to support their points. To the candidates and the viewing public, we weren't part of one campaign or another. We were the arbiters, a trusted, third-party source of information. That is core to our identity.

The ads undermine the work we do and threaten to muddy that perception with the readers who rely on us.

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AWL
bradshaw
~~Kenneth W. Rosenthal~~
Annie
Mavis Macdonald
Agnes Johnson
Lau Tak Yee
Lynn Thompson
Steve Milotich
Ernesto Aguirre
Kishon Jackson -
Kathleen Day Rick L
Al Bernier

Be of
Penny Weflund
Mike Carl
Sun Kelly
Holly L Hulke
Brian Cantrell
B. L. P.
Nirle Brod
Reich Crivin
Bark
Dy Pen
Jeff Reitz
Bd Wagn
S. C. Green

Michael P. Lindblom
Sanjana Bhattacharya

Enka J. Knottz Digi Pao Melissa Allison
Kelly Shee Digi Pao Ritz Wong
Mark Nouli Maberry Rob Davis
Holly L. White Carol McCloskey
Elow Kees Gabriel Campanario Just In
Ken Lambert
Steve F. Ruggman Lauren Fabiano
Greg Gilbert Kristiell Cathy McLain
Quell M. Orr Villenser Katie Greene
Mary A. Cuffman Jennifer Simon Lynn Thompson
Kraig L. Baug Nancy Leson Just In
S. Giller BFDI
Michael Way Lucy Ho
Ken & Annette Amy Hoy
Hal Bernstein
E. Bell Debbie Amy Hoy
Jane L. Mac Donald Debbie Wade Chen
Susan Schulte
Carl Neice Carol Nakagawa The BORDER
Judy Brent
Nina Kiley Marilee Peter Gelin
Kenneth W. Bonsuwa Offas JP
Kyoung Song Beth Kaine
Andrew Barber

signed
Amy E. Shultz
Sandi Doughton
Dean Rutz
Michael Uclue
Jeff Dawson
Paul Barnes
Mary Ann Gwinn
Jor Jile
Arlene Ogle
Hannah Birch

Courtney Biechen Riffkin
Realt 2 Payne
Misha Benson
Bettina Hansen
Jill W.
Joy Solon
Evan Bush
Albert McMurry
~~Mark J. L. S.~~
David Haakanson
Bob Heggins
Lori Kuster
Rogard & Comford
Mesa Z. Sudds